

**Community Preservation Act Committee (CPAC)**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**Wednesday, May 5, 2010**

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm by Peter Jessop, Chair, in the Home Economics Room of Amherst Regional Middle School.

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:**

Denise Barberet, John Gerber, Louis Greenbaum Michael Jacques, Peter Jessop, Chair; Mary Streeter, Clerk

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:** Ellen Kosmer, Vince O'Connor, Stan Ziomek

**STAFF / OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:** Sonia Aldrich, Linda Chalfant, Dave Ziomek

**AGENDA**

- Hawthorne Property Discussion
- Approve minutes
- Adjourn

**Hawthorne Property Discussion**

Dave Ziomek discussed the options for use of the Hawthorne property for open space, affordable housing and recreation. There is a two-part process. According to Town Counsel the use does not have to be specified before Annual Town Meeting votes. We would just request Town Meeting's authorization to borrow the funds at this time. Article 97 of the Community Preservation Act requires that there must be a restriction appropriate to the funding source for every part of the property. Dave expects to come back to Fall Town Meeting with a map indicating the specific areas for each use. Dave Ziomek and Linda Chalfant have had considerable discussion with Town Counsel concerning this process.

The value of the house is \$225,000 and the remainder is the value of the land. Dave informed us that once we purchase the house with CPA funds, we cannot sell off the house at fair market value as the committee had considered earlier. We could demo the house, use it for affordable housing for 1 or 2 units, or donate the house to Habitat for Humanity and let them rehab it. He said we need the summer to explore the options with the Housing Committee and Habitat for Humanity. Dave said in a worst case scenario there would be no affordable housing and the full \$500,000 would be allocated toward recreation. Peter reminded Dave that CPAC wanted to keep the options open to allow as many uses as possible. Louis commented that we should provide money to develop 1 or 2 units of affordable housing. Peter suggested that no commitment has been made by CPAC to provide additional funds and that the project should stand on its own merits along with other proposals.

In response to Louis' question about whether the property would carry the Hawthorne name and whether any price concession could be made, Linda reminded the committee that the Hawthorne family has waited patiently while the Town's due diligence and funding process takes place and said it is ultimately up to the Select Board as Park Commissioners to name the property. The property could have been sold off as five building lots.

Dave added that gifting the property to Habitat might require further funding from CPAC. The cost-benefit of rehab for the house has to be done. Denise commented that we haven't had any formal assessment of the condition of the property. Dave said he would have an architect look at the house during the summer. The preliminary engineering work to make fields and wetlands delineation has been done.

In response to Peter's question about what might happen if there was an amendment at Town Meeting to preserve this property solely as open space/ agricultural preservation, John said the open space on this property is not a priority habitat of the Conservation Commission. There are wetlands which would be preserved as open space.

Peter asked whether the process for developing the site would be done by staff or whether there would be input from the community. Denise suggested a process such as occurred for Kendrick Park to occur. Dave commented that that would be a much larger process than he had envisioned. He suggested involvement by LSSE, the Housing Partnership and town staff with input from the Conservation Commission perhaps through Stephanie Ciccarello. Peter cautioned that it is important for Town Meeting that some sort of public process be planned for. Mary said she had voted for this project after receiving staff reassurances that there would be a public process, and not just one involving Housing Partnership, LSSE, ConCom, and staff. Dave said a series of public meetings could be held during the summer where public input is taken. He added that a trail, and possibly a small area for community gardens could be included. Denise, speaking in favor of community gardens and passive recreation, rather than more athletic fields, stressed that the new emphasis on relocation and growing one's own food should be considered seriously. Michael commented that he was asked why we are spending half a million dollars on more fields rather than affordable

housing. Everyone concurred that the location of this property for the three uses (open space, recreation, affordable housing) is ideal. Dave said Amherst is number three in the Commonwealth in agricultural preservation; we have 80 miles of hiking trails, 2500 acres of conservation land, and this is not priority agricultural land. Linda added that we have 56 acres of parkland not counting Cherry Hill and that the schools and recreation programs do not have enough playing spaces. Mary stressed that Town Meeting members are seeking complete information on projects which can be posted on the website and sent out via the listserv.

Peter said he would stay in touch with Dave over the summer in case there are any new developments with regard to Hawthorne or open space projects.

#### **MINUTES**

**Motion** by Mike, 2nd by Louis to approve the minutes of **4/1/2010**. **VOTED 6-0**

**Motion** by Mike, 2nd by Louis to approve the minutes of **4/15/2010** with grammatical changes. **VOTED 6-0**

#### **NEXT MEETINGS**

Our next meetings will usually be scheduled for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursdays of the month from September through April 2011 at 7:00 pm in the Town Room, if available.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

A motion was made by Mike, 2nd by Mary to adjourn at 7:20 pm. Voted unanimously.

#### **DOCUMENTS DISTRIBUTED**

- Agenda
- Hawthorne Property color photo map (Map 11B Parcel 54) – “Annual Town Meeting Spring 2010 Article 17B”, 1 page
- Minutes of April 1, 2010, 2 pages
- Minutes of April 15, 2010, 2 pages

Respectfully submitted by Mary Streeter, Clerk

Approved September 16, 2010